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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

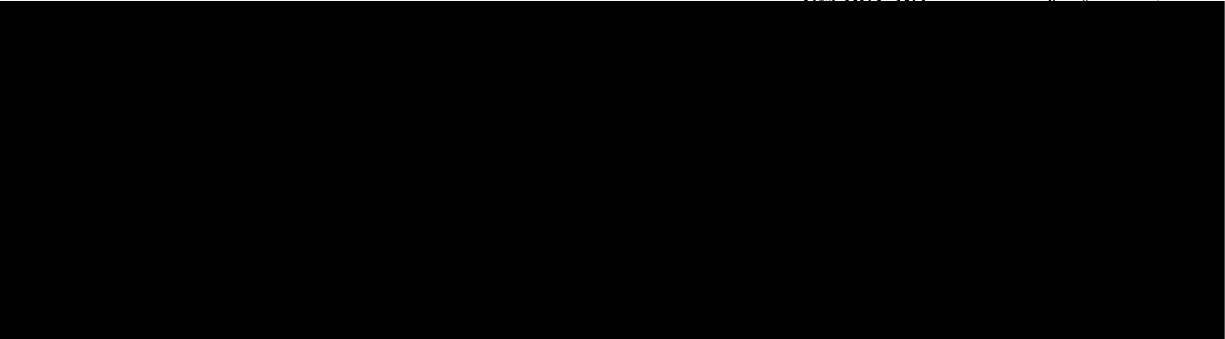
REPORT NO. [REDACTED]
25X1A

COUNTRY Austria (Russian Zone)
SUBJECT Shortage of Crude Oil for Austrian Refineries

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. [REDACTED]



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1. As of mid-July 1948, some Austrian refineries have not been working full time. The Moosbierbaum refinery, for example, is working only 3 to 4 hours daily. The quantities of crude oil left over after this daily period of operation are allegedly transferred for further processing to Korneuburg. The reason for this could not be ascertained. The second informant remarks that the greatly decreased crude oil allotments to Austrian refineries, plus personnel layoffs, are responsible for curtailed refining operations.
2. During the second half of July, all refineries appealed regularly to the central storage point WIFO in the Lobau for increased oil allocations.
3. There is a persistent rumor in the Zistersdorf fields that two refineries, one of them Moosbierbaum, will soon be shut down. The second informant states that these plans have not yet become crystallized, since the Central Administration of Soviet Oil Companies in Austria is dependent upon Moscow for policy decisions. However, he cites the costly inconsistency of many Soviet moves, such as the frequently interrupted work on the Moosbierbaum cracking plant. Another example is the importing from Czechoslovakia of parts for the completion of a small cracking plant in Korneuburg, while other refineries are suffering from a shortage of crude oil. His explanation is that perhaps the Soviets really intend to give up Moosbierbaum and concentrate on the more favorably located and more modern Korneuburg refinery.

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Comment: If the information about short allocations to refineries and imminent shutdown is true, this may be a possible indication of a Soviet decision greatly to increase crude oil exports. Local inquiries have failed to reveal any knowledge of decreased allocations. The Diesel oil available to Austria indicates no slackening of refining activities. However, it is admittedly possible that present deliveries are made from stocks on hand and a decrease in allocations may first appear in August PCI allocations to the Austrian Government. Despite the notorious inconsistency of the Soviets, it is difficult to imagine that this would be carried to the point of sacrificing one of the largest Austrian refineries, in which very considerable sums have been invested. It is recommended that this information be treated with reserve until further details become available).

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